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ABSTRACT

During its second year, the Hispanic Vocational Exploration Project recruited eighth and ninth grade Hispanic youth for a four-week cycle, after-school, career exploratory program at Southeastern Regional Vocational Technical School, Groton, Connecticut. A series of career education workshops was the other major project activity. Supportive services offered to participants were counseling (personal, career, and academic), and an after-school tutorial program. Social and recreational activities were also available. Outreach and recruitment strategies emphasizing sex fairness included bulk mailings, use of the Spanish language radio station, parent orientation, and identification through the school system. Instructors assessed each participant's performance for each shop. Evaluation of program goals and objectives revealed that the program (1) developed awareness in vocational education as an educational alternative for Hispanic youth, (2) was successful in increasing the sensitivity and awareness of the vocational school in regard to Hispanic students, and (3) developed cooperative mechanisms between the school and Hispanic community to recruit students. (Appendixes include project materials, sample career workshop format, and evaluation forms.) (YLB)

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HISPANIC VOCATIONAL EXPLORATION PROJECT

FINAL REPORT

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PREFACE

The Hispanic Vocational Exploration Project which is the subject of this report began as a cooperative venture of the two Hispanic agencies in New London--the Spanish-American Cultural Organization and Nuestra Casa--and was conceived as part of a larger joint enterprise in "Career and Vocational Exploration" for Hispanic youth funded through the Connecticut State Department of Human Resources.

The cooperative nature of this venture has acquired a significance for the two sponsoring organizations and the community they serve far beyond the impact of the specific programs and services offered. The successful joining of forces two years ago was a historical first. But more importantly, it initiated a trend of sharing staffs and resources, energies and creativity, critical thinking and sensitivity, in which the benefits and products on behalf of the community have far exceeded the capability of either agency alone. It was no surprise, therefore, that on October 12, 1980 the Board of Directors of Nuestra Casa, Inc. and the Spanish-American Cultural Organization, Inc. formally voted to unite the two agencies. The new united organization was named Centro de la Comunidad, Inc.

The same spirit of cooperation and sharing which culminated in a united Hispanic agency extended beyond the two organizations, and, to a large extent, the success of

this project must be attributed to the substantial involvement of many sectors of the community.

The Hispanic Vocational Exploration Project, itself, was conceived to address the following dilemma:

> Gainful employment requires marketable skills;
> Marketable skills result from training and education;
> To a large extent Hispanics are excluded from the established structures for training and education;
> Therefore, Hispanics do not acquire the marketable skills necessary for gainful employment.

The arena chosen for addressing this dilemma was the public vocational education system in Southeastern Connecticut; the target population was Hispanic youth.

This report attempts to present clearly and objectively another year of exploring, learning, and growing for all involved in this project. It is our greatest hope that it will be of some benefit to all who read it.

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Joyce Schmidt, Director of the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center's Creative Arts in Education Program, and Barbara Goodwillie, principal artist of the Community Outreach Program.

John Bitters, workshop consultant for the Social Services Institute at Mohegan Community College.

The Board of Directors and staff of Centro de la Comunidad.

I. INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

Despite the fact that the New London area has a substantial Hispanic population,[1] the enrollment of Hispanics in the two area regional vocational technical schools is minimal. In 1979 there were 10 Hispanics enrolled in the Norwich Regional Technical School and 9 in the Southeastern Regional Vocational Technical School. The low percentage of Hispanic enrollment has been characteristic throughout the last few years as indicated by the following chart:

Regional Vocational School Enrollment[2]

	Year	Total	Hispanics	%of Hispanics
Norwich Regional Technical School	1976	685	5	.7
	1977	741	6	.8
	1978	718	9	1.2
	1979	678	10	1.5
	1980	726	13	1.79
Southeastern Regional Technical School	1977	433	4	.9
	1978	610	11	1.8
	1979	710	9	1.3
	1980	803	9	1.12

The regional picture is typical of the larger statewide picture. Statewide enrollment figures for Hispanics are shown in the following chart:

Connecticut Public Vocational School Enrollment[3]

Year	Total	Hispanics	% of Hispanics
1976	11,590	291	2.5
1977	11,811	375	3.1
1978	12,454	366	2.9
1979	15,527	460	3.7
1980	13,135	517	3.93

While the general vocational school enrollment has consistently increased (in the last three years) there was no similar consistent pattern of increase for Hispanic enrollment.

The underrepresentation of Hispanics in the vocational school population appears even more significant when we examine the general public school enrollment figures for the last five years:

Connecticut Public School Enrollment[4]

Year	Total	Hispanics	% of Hispanics
1976	630,540	28,882	4.5
1977	609,443	29,899	4.9
1978	573,521	30,040	5.2
1979	556,577	31,180	5.6
1980	540,862	32,443	5.99

The above chart indicates that in a period when the general public school population was decreasing (1976-1980) the Hispanic public school population was increasing. Thus, although there were greater numbers of Hispanics in the public education system, there was no corresponding increase in Hispanic vocational school enrollment.

Finally, consideration must be given to those uncounted Hispanic students who never enter the secondary educational system because their possibilities for success appear so limited. If vocational education were a viable option for these drop-outs, their numbers would surely be reduced. It is apparent that on both a regional and statewide basis, the vocational education system is not proportionately serving the Hispanic population.

Rationale

A 1977 study by Central Connecticut State College[5] cites the inadequacies of the existing vocational education system to serve students of limited English-speaking ability. Among other reasons the study cites that there are inadequate vocational and career awareness programs for this population; that linguistic limitations interfere with success in vocational programs; that there is lack of bilingual staff in the system; that instruction is not offered in the student's dominant language; and that there is a lack of sensitivity to cultural differences.

The lack of Hispanic representation in the vocational technical schools without a doubt is also a function of the general plight of this minority group in the United States. A 1976 report by the United States Commission on Civil Rights[6] provides ample sociological and demographical data to substantiate that the mainland Puerto Rican population is one of the most disadvantaged groups in all areas--education, employment, etc. Puerto Ricans have the lowest median income, the highest unemployment rate, the highest concentration of low-skilled jobs, the least accessibility to employment training, one of the lowest educational levels, etc. This picture has not changed substantially in the last five years. On October 16, 1978, a Time Magazine[7] article states, "As a group, Hispanics are the most undereducated of Americans...Only 40% have completed high school, vs. 46% of U.S. blacks and 67% of the whites." It goes on to say that Puerto Ricans are the most "beleaguered national group among the estimated 2.6 million Hispanics in and near New York City".

The firsthand experience of the two Hispanic agencies in New London--Nuestra Casa and the Spanish-American Cultural Organization[8]--corroborates that the Hispanic population is undereducated and underemployed and that it manifests all the social, political, and economic problems of a disadvantaged minority group. The Hispanic youth is generally characterized by low educational performance, a significant school dropout

rate, and severe unemployment. The reasons for this are not hard to find.

The Hispanic youth is confronted by cultural disparities which impact upon his psychological and social development in the American culture. These cultural disparities include language, race (a complex issue), family structure, foods, music, and basic moral and ethical values. The significant factor in this context is that the Hispanic presence in New London is strong and that the youth are able and encouraged to maintain their culture, rather than "mainstream" into the American way of life. Furthermore, because of the permanent and dynamic character of Puerto Rican migration (due to U.S. citizenship status, proximity of the island, low air fares, and the political and economic conditions in Puerto Rico), the Hispanic youth does not follow the traditional integration pattern, even into the second, third, and fourth generations.

Many Hispanic youths also have linguistic problems, some are Spanish-speaking only, particularly new arrivals to the mainland. Some, while having resided in the United States for a period of time, are Spanish dominant because of the language spoken at home and in the neighborhoods. Some, while Spanish dominant do not have a good command of their own language because of the lack of formal Spanish language instruction and the low educational level of their families and friends. Some are English dominant, but experience linguistic

interference because of environmental factors. In many cases, language dominance is so confused that neither language is spoken proficiently. If one accepts that language is the basis of all learning, then the predicament of the Hispanic youth is painfully obvious.

Given this unique linguistic and cultural context, it can be deduced that the problems of unemployed, undereducated Hispanic youth are not only the lack of academic instruction, vocational training, or economic development, but also poor self-image and an undefined identity--both individual and collective--which, in turn, impede motivation, self-actualization, and achievement. Any project which focuses on training and education, therefore, must confront also this fundamental issue.

The Hispanic Vocational Exploration Program which is the subject of this proposal has been implemented for two years. In these two years the experience of Centro de la Comunidad[8] has corroborated the assessment of the problem described above. More importantly, however, this experience has helped to define that problem more concretely and to develop specific strategies for addressing it constructively. These strategies, which will be described in detail in this report, fall into four major areas:

(1) An effective outreach and recruitment campaign to inform and prepare prospective Hispanic candidates for admission to the Southeastern Regional Vocational Technical School.

(2) The implementation of a multi-faceted support system wherein the Hispanic student can make career and education decisions based on self-knowledge;

(3) An exploration of strategies for the retention and successful participation of those Hispanic students already at the school.

(4) The dissemination of the results of this program at the local, regional, and state levels, with special emphasis on those generic elements which have proved most successful.

These four strategies have been tested and refined in this, the second program year, and have established a solid foundation for a truly institutional change in vocational education for Hispanics in Connecticut.

II. PROJECT DESIGN

General Design

The overall design of the project was to recruit twenty 8th and 9th grade Hispanic youth in each four-week cycle and enroll them in an after-school exploratory program at Southeastern Regional Vocational Technical School in Groton, Conn. The exploratory program consisted of three two-hour after-school sessions per week, Monday through Wednesday. A four-week cycle was offered in each shop, during which time the participants were given a general introduction to the shop and completed a "hands-on" project. The specific curriculum of each shop included basic safety procedures for the handling of equipment and tools, an introduction to the basic equipment used in each trade, and career possibilities within each trade. When possible the instructors included a visit to a related worksite or industry, i.e. a hospital and a construction site. At the completion of each cycle the participants moved on to another shop. Six different shops were offered throughout the year: auto-body, health services, food services, welding, machine tool and plumbing.

The 20 participants were divided into two groups and a counselor/supervisor assigned to each group. The counselor/supervisor drove the students (using an agency van) to the vocational school, and accompanied the group during the shop

session. In the shop the counselor provided interpretation and translation services when needed, and assisted the instructor. At the end of each session the counselor/ supervisor drove the participants home. In addition to the actual exploratory courses at the vocational school, the other major project activity was a series of career education workshops. These were given between each cycle of shops and consisted of 1 to 3 two-hour sessions. Most of these were conducted at the New London Public Library. The workshops were designed and facilitated by consultants from Mohegan Community College, the Eugene O'Neill Theater and by project staff. The purpose of these workshops was to encourage self-examination, teach decision making skills, facilitate values clarification and build self-esteem.

A number of supportive services were offered to the participants throughout the program year. The most important of these was a counseling and tutoring component. A part-time bilingual counselor was placed 18 hours a week at the New London Junior High (where most of the participants were enrolled) to provide one-to-one personal, career and academic counseling. The counselor/tutor assessed students' academic deficiencies, developed individual remediation plans and provided direct tutorial services. An after-school

tutorial program was also available to the project participants through the ongoing educational services of Centro de la Comunidad. This counseling and tutoring component also provided an essential linkage between the project, the school and the home through direct and systematic communication with parents.

To complement the exploratory, career education and counseling/tutoring components, social and recreational activities were available to the participants through Centro de la Comunidad. These included sports activities, theater trips and roller skating parties.

Staffing

Two bilingual counselor/supervisors (a male and a female) were hired on a part-time basis to do recruitment and outreach, provide transportation, accompany the participants in the exploratory shops and assist the vocational instructor. They provided interpretation for participants of limited English-ability, served as a liaison between the project and the home, assisted in the career education workshops, provided information and referral services and provided informal one-to-one and group counseling. They were present at and supervised all project activities and also served as a vital linkage between the vocational school and the community. They also worked very closely with the in-school counselor/tutor.

In addition to the two counselor/supervisors and the part-time, in-school counselor/tutor (see description under General Design), a part-time bilingual clerical assistant completed the paid staff. The vocational instructors were hired on a contractual basis and were recruited by the vocational school administration. Career education workshop consultants were provided in-kind to the program through Centro de la Comunidad.

Additional in-kind services were provided by Centro's staff. These included the Executive Director, the Program Director of Youth Services, an Administrative Assistant and the Program Director of Adult Services. These in-kind staff persons provided planning, supervision and evaluation of the program.

Sex Equity

Speciál attention was given to recruiting female participants. The problem of attracting female students to the vocational schools, which exists in the population at large, is compounded in the Hispanic population by the sexist bias so entrenched in the culture. Nevertheless, every effort was made to deal sensitively, but forcefully, with this issue. The following strategy was implemented

to insure sex equity in the project:

1. Curriculum: Shops that are traditionally attractive to women were included in the curriculum. However, all female participants were required to participate in the non-traditional shops which were offered. As part of the recruitment and orientation of participants, special attention was given to promoting the special talents which women can contribute to trades, i.e. fine motor coordination, and to the economic and employment benefits available to skilled women. Finally, through counseling and general educational techniques, female participants were encouraged to evaluate their experiences based on aptitude and interest rather than on sex bias.

2. Project Personnel: The employment of staff and the appointment of Advisory Committee members took into consideration the affirmative action policies of both agencies, with special attention being given to the inclusion of females for the purpose of role model identification and sensitivity to the female experience. All orientation and ongoing inservice training of staff stresssed the necessity of breaking down artificial sexist stereotypes, while dealing sensitively with the cultural heritage of the Hispanic female participants.

Setting

In addition to the Southeastern Regional Vocational Technical School and the New London Junior High, project components were offered on the premises of Centro de la Comunidad and the New London and Waterford Public Libraries.

Participants

As stated earlier, the target population were 8th and 9th grade Hispanic youth. Enrollment was open-ended to ensure maximum participation. Any interested participant in this target group was eligible regardless of language dominance, public or private school enrollment, academic

standing or economic status. The basic criteria for eligibility was interest in learning about another educational alternative. Since often Hispanics are excluded from programs because they do not meet entry level requirements this program was as flexible as possible in this area.

Methods

Various methods were used to publicize the project and recruit participants, including bulk mailings and the use of the Spanish language radio station. However, based on previous experience, students were identified through the school system and directly contacted by the counselor/supervisors. If interest was demonstrated in participating in the program, parents were contacted and the program described in detail in order to insure their support and cooperation.

Prior to the beginning of the program an orientation to Southeastern Regional Vocational Technical School was given to the parents at the school in cooperation with school personnel. In addition to touring the facilities parents had the opportunity to ask questions and meet all project staff.

A file was kept on each participant which contained all relevant information, including attendance, progress reports, evaluations, and academic and personal data.

Course content and materials used in the exploratory shops were determined by each individual instructor. Instructors were asked to submit an assessment of each participant's performance at the completion of each session.

This assessment included rating the participants' performance and attitude in the shop, identifying academic deficiencies and language problems, and assessing aptitude for the trade. (See page 10 for specific skills learned in each shop and Appendix F for the evaluation instrument.)

Post Program Follow-Up

An important aspect of the second program year of the Hispanic Vocational Exploration Program was the opportunity it offered to follow-up on the participants who enrolled at Southeastern Regional Technical Vocational School during the 1980-81 academic year.

Four participants from the first program year, two males and two females, went to the vocational school. They were the only Hispanic students to attend from New London that year. All four have completed their first year at the school. The females have chosen to go into Food Services and Health Services, respectively. As of this writing it is not certain that both males will return to the school next year. Although both participants and the vocational school's guidance counselor have been interviewed it is difficult to pinpoint any

one specific reason for this. Adjustment problems and disappointment over shop assignments for next year are possible causes. However, it is obvious that retention is an area that deserves greater attention if the success of this program is to be measured in long range terms. This is especially true for the 81-82 academic year when 10 participants plan to enter the vocational school.[9] The issue of retention will be addressed further under Recommendations and in the 1981-82 proposal. Meanwhile, every effort is being made by project staff and the guidance office to ensure that these particular students make the best informed decision.

III. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Hispanic Vocational Exploration Project addressed itself to two objectives as outlined in the Vocational Education Program Improvements Guide:

> 79-E-5: Programs designed to broaden occupational aspirations and opportunities for youth, with special emphasis given to youth who have academic, socioeconomic, or other handicaps, including (a) programs and projects designed to familiarize elementary and secondary school students with the broad range of occupations for which special skills are required and the requisites for careers in such occupations, and (b) programs and projects to facilitate the participation of employers and labor organizations in post-secondary vocational education;
>
> and
>
> 79-E-3: Programs of effective vocational education for individuals with limited English-speaking ability.

Within the first stated objective (79-E-5) the goals were:

a. To expose and orient the participants to vocational education generally not available to them.

b. To provide a "hands-on" vocational activity so that the participants will become familiar with the equipment, tools, materials, and activities of various trades at the vocational school.

c. To evaluate the vocational education possibilities of each participant.

d. To assess the academic needs of each participant and provide for remediation services as needed.

e. To encourage self-examination, decision-making skills, and values clarification by the participants.

f. To continue communication with the field of vocational education at the state and local levels for ongoing and future program possibilities.

The goals within the second stated objective (79-E-3) were:

a. To provide bilingual/bicultural personnel throughout the program in order to facilitate the participation of Hispanics.

b. To use the Hispanic agencies as a linkage between the vocational school system and the Hispanic community.

c. To explore with the administration and staff of the vocational school the special needs of Hispanic students.

d. To explore specific strategies for recruiting and orientating Hispanic students to the vocational school system.

IV. EVALUATION OF GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The following will be an examination of each of the goals and objectives of the project and an evaluation of the extent to which they were achieved.

Goal #1 - <u>To expose and orient the participants to vocational education generally not available to them</u>.

In the second year of the Hispanic Vocational Exploration Program 33 youth were exposed to Southeastern Regional Vocational Technical School in Groton. Most of the participants, with the exception of three 7th graders and two 9th graders, were from the 8th grade. Staff concentrated on recruiting from this target population for two reasons: the entrance examination to Southeastern Regional Vocational Technical School is given in the 8th grade and due to the limited number of slots, it is difficult for 9th graders to enter the school. However, both 7th and 9th graders were recruited once the pool of interested 8th graders was exhausted.

Among the participants 8 were of limited English speaking ability and one was identified by the school as educationally mentally retarded.

Following are statistics on enrollment, completions and attendance:

Enrollment By Age and Sex

No. of Participants	Age	Male	Female
12	13 years	5	7
6	14 years	3	3
15	15 years	7	8
33		15	18

Rate of Completion
(Attended 50% or more)

Cycle	% of Participants
Cycle 1	90%
Cycle 2	73%
Cycle 3	71%
Cycle 4	62%
Cycle 5	63%
Cycle 6	87%

Enrollment and Attendance Per Cycle

Cycle	No. Enrolled	Average Attendance
1	20	91%
3	21	72%
4	21	61%
5	16	68%
6	15	66%

Average attendance has been adversely affected by a high incidence of school absenteeism. In a group of 20 participants 55% were absent over 5 times during the school year (excluding May and June). Of these, 45% were absent 10 times or more.

Eighteen participants did not complete the 6 shop cycles for various reasons which included: too much school work (4), after-school jobs (4), moving away (2), discipline problems (1), extra-curricular activities (1), problems conforming to dress code (1), numerous absences (1), lack of interest (2).

It is interesting to note that 6 of these 18 participants (33%) withdrew from the program in the sixth cycle after having passed the admissions procedure. Five of them will enroll at Southeastern Regional Vocational Technical School next academic year. Although a variety of reasons were given, 9 of the remaining 12 participants who withdrew from the program decided that vocational education did not interest them. Three left involuntarily.

Goal #2 - <u>To provide a hands-on vocational activity so that the participants will become familiar with the equipment, tools, materials, and activities of various trades at the vocational school</u>.

Under the expert supervision of vocational school teachers, and using the facilities of Southeastern Regional Vocational Technical School, participants learned to use the equipment, machines and tools pertinent to each shop.

Specific accomplishments in each shop included:

Auto Body - painting, sanding, brazing, body filling

Health Services - bandaging, urine testing, taking blood pressure

Food Services - baking (pizza, rolls) soup and dessert making

Welding - arc welding, burning

Machine Shop - turning on lathe, using and reading a micrometer, making a bolt, operating a drill press.

Plumbing - reaming, cutting and threading steel pipes; flaring, "squeezing" and soldering copper pipes, assembling a piping system, and testing for leaks.

Goal #3 - To evaluate the vocational possibilities of each participant

An occupational preference test (COPS) was administered to participants during the initial career education workshops in September. Staff worked with students to facilitate the taking of the test. Each student was then seen individually by the in-school counselor to discuss the results of the test.

Participants were also evaluated by the vocational teachers based on their performance in the shops. When a student was thus identified as a prospective candidate for vocational education a meeting with the counselor/tutor followed to discuss the evaluation and future plans.

In addition to the formal evaluations described above, the important role of the counselor/tutor in this process cannot be emphasized enough. Numerous personal interviews were conducted with participants to explore alternatives, define preferences, and set career goals. As a result of these efforts 12 participants (36%) chose to go to the vocational school, although only 10 were admitted. The other 21 participants will continue with their traditional studies.

Goal #4 - To assess the academic needs of each participant and provide for remediation services as needed.

The counselor/tutor had access to all school records, including progress reports and grades. Close lines of communication were also established with the teachers. At least one teacher per participant was contacted. This enabled staff to keep abreast of the academic progress of each participant in order to identify problem areas and develop remediation plans. Of the 33 participants, 29 received tutorial assistance an average of 10 times per semester.

The average grade of participants at the end of this school year (1980-81) was 2.5. Fifty-three percent (53%) had a B or above average. The break-down by grade average at the end of the year is as follows:

Average Grade	No. of Participants
A	5
B	12
C	9
D	5
L.D.	1
E.M.R.	1
	33 Total

Fifty-nine percent (59%) of the participants maintained the same grade average as in the previous year, 29% raised their grade average, and 18% lowered it.

Goal #5 - To encourage self-examination, decision making skills, and values clarification by the participants.

A total of 16 career education workshops were given in conjunction with consultants from Mohegan Community College and the Eugene O'Neill Theater, specifically designed to foster self-esteem, promote values clarification, and develop decision-making skills. Progress was made toward meeting this objective. Based on staff observations 22 participants demonstrated discernable growth in self-confidence, socialization, and decision-making skills. Positive feedback was also received from staff at the Junior High School. In general, participants, especially through role playing, showed increasing willingness to probe emotions and explore behavior pertaining to peer pressure, adult authority, social relationships, and feelings of inadequacy. (See Appendix E).

Goal #6 - To continue communication with the field of vocational education at the state and local levels for ongoing and future program possibilities.

Regular contact was maintained with Southeastern Regional Vocational Technical School administration to insure the smooth operation of the program. Meetings were also held with the School's Director of Adult Education to explore

cooperative ventures in vocational education for Hispanic adults. Staff also met with each vocational teacher prior to the beginning of each new cycle to discuss the goals of the project, the curriculum, procedures for buying materials, and rules and regulations. Issues of Hispanic culture and language and how they might impact on the program were also discussed.

State and local representatives from the field of vocational education were active members of the program's Citizens Advisory Committee.

At the state level, program staff participated in a demonstration project organized by the Department of Vocational Education to make the program known to the educational community.

Centro's staff was active in committees that impact vocational education at the local level. The Executive Director and the Program Director are members of the Citizen's Advisory Committee and the Admissions Committee of Southeastern Regional Vocational Technical School, respectively.

Goal #7 - <u>To provide bilingual/bicultural personnel throughout the program in order to facilitate the participation of Hispanics</u>.

The bilingual capability of staff was critical to the success of the program. This was particularly true in two areas: supportive services for limited English proficiency

participants, and communication with parents. Since eight of the participants were of limited English proficiency it was imperative that the counselors speak Spanish, especially in order to translate in the shops. The use of Spanish was also essential in order to inform parents about the program, gain their support, and involve them more closely in the educational process of their children.

Goal #8 - To use the Hispanic agencies as a linkage between the vocational school system and the Hispanic community.

In terms of its bilingual staff, its regular and positive interaction with the Hispanic community, and the rapport it established with that community, Centro de la Comunidad was in a singular position to serve as a link between the vocational school and the target population. Centro was able to disseminate information about the school's programs, entrance requirements, test dates, and other pertinent information to the community. This information was relayed in Spanish, either directly or through mailings and the media. As part of this information dissemination effort, parents were taken to the school where they toured the facility and met with school personnel.

The agency also played a vital role in the area of recruitment of Hispanic students into Southeastern Regional

Vocational Technical School. Although the school embarks annually on a recruitment effort through the Junior High School, the only Hispanic students from New London attending the school this academic year were participants from last year's Hispanic Vocational Exploration Program. This year out of a total of 14 Hispanic students admitted, 12 were from the Hispanic Exploration Program. These figures are a clear indication of the crucial role the agency played in the recruitment of students.

Goal #9 - To explore with the administration and staff of the vocational school the special needs of Hispanic students.

The Hispanic Vocational Exploration Program was instrumental in confirming the principle on which Centro de la Comunidad was founded, namely, that the Hispanic population has needs which must be specifically addressed. The program attests to the fact that if recruitment efforts are to be successful and career goals are to be achieved, special strategies must be implemented. These include direct and personal communication with prospective candidates and their parents, the use of bilingual and sensitive bicultural personnel, the need to include supportive services such as personal and career counseling and tutoring, and the need for advocates to serve as a link between students and the

vocational school system. It is also clear that if limited English proficiency students are to take advantage of the vocational opportunities available through the vocational system the presence of bilingual personnel in the shops and at the school is critical. The personnel in the shops and at the school is critical. The school's administration and staff are well aware of these issues and sensitive to them, however, it is unlikely that they will be addressed in the near future due to the limited number of Hispanics presently enrolled at the school and the limitation of funding.

Goal #10 - To explore specific strategies for recruiting and orienting Hispanic students to the vocational school system.

The following chart shows the Hispanic enrollment at Southeastern Regional Vocational Technical School for the 80-81 school year. Out of a total of 10 students enrolled, 4 are previous participants of the Vocational Exploration Project. These 4 were the only Hispanic freshmen that enrolled in the school for the year 1980-81. It is obvious that if recruitment of Hispanics for the vocational school is to be effective, a much more community-oriented approach than is presently followed is needed. Although the project has utilized such traditional methods as radio spots, flyers, mailings, and posters, the only proven method is direct contact with the prospective participants, extensive personal

and career counseling, and direct communication with the parents in Spanish.

Hispanic Population At Southeastern Regional Technical Vocational School 1980-81		
GRADE	MALE	FEMALE
9	2 (exploratory)	2 (exploratory)
10	1 electrical	1 Drafting
		2 Foods
11		1 Drafting
		1 Health
	3	7 = 10 students

V. UNANTICIPATED PROBLEMS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Despite the fact that the program was in its second year of operation and that all phases had been given careful consideration, there were still areas that would benefit from additional fine-tuning. Each one of these areas will be examined and recommendations made.

Recruitment

In an effort to reach the target population that would most benefit from an exploratory program in the vocational school system, recruitment was concentrated on the eighth grade population at the New London Junior High School. Although filling the number of slots was not difficult at first, by the 5th cycle it became apparent that the number of 8th graders interested in the program had been exhausted. Recruitment efforts which were directed to 9th graders, older 7th graders, and the parochial schools, met with limited success.

Attendance

The major effect of school absenteeism on program attendance has already been addressed (see evaluation goals). This is an area involving issues of health and family priorities which are beyond the immediate scope of this program. However, it is hoped that regular communication

with parents and continued community education (i.e. parent groups already begun by the agency) will have a positive impact.

Another factor affecting program attendance was the timing of the admission procedure to Southeastern Regional Vocational Technical School. This procedure, which includes a test and an interview, is initiated during the month of February. It is interesting to note that interest in the program by 8th graders fell dramatically after that date (fourth cycle). The remaining two cycles seemed to be viewed as anti-climactic.

Recommendations: In order to address the above concerns regarding recruitment and attendance it is recommended that 8th graders from the three area intermediate schools be recruited for the first 4 cycles (Sept-Feb) and that recruitment concentrate on 7th graders for the last 2 cycles. These 7th graders would then have the opportunity to complete the remaining 4 cycles in the next program year. This procedure would enable us to increase the pool of prospective candidates that would most benefit from the program.

Dress Code

The dress code has been difficult to enforce. Some participants had to be constantly reminded of the need to wear adequate clothing and safety shoes. In some instances they were barred by the instructor from taking part in a

particular activity for this reason.

The causes of this problem seem to be both cultural and economic. With the first group of participants the importance given in the Hispanic culture to proper feminine attire was the determining factor. As the year progressed and new participants enrolled the economic factor assumed an important role. Parents were understandably reluctant to invest money in work shoes, for example, for a program of a relatively short duration.

Recommendation: Staff will continue to deal sensitively with those aspects of the problem that can be effectively altered, namely those cultural attitudes which limit the participation of females in vocational education programs. Personnal counseling of the participants and education of parents will be critical components of this strategy.

Retention

As the program went into its second year of operation staff had the opportunity to follow-up on those students who participated in the first year and enrolled at Southeastern Regional Vocational Technical School in the 1980-81 academic year. In so doing it was discovered that 2 of the 4 students enrolled did not plan to return to the school next year. Reasons for this were not clear, but issues of adjustment and placement seemed to play an important role.

Recommendation: It is clear that if Hispanics are to take full advantage of the public vocational education system, it is not enough that they enroll in the system. They must meet with some degree of success once they are there. They must deal effectively with adjustment problems, achieve well both in the shops and academically, and eventually graduate. In order to evaluate the issue of retention in the vocational school system and to provide support for Hispanic youth enrolled there it is recommended that a counselor/tutor be placed at Southeastern Regional Vocational Technical School for at least 10 hours a week.

VI. ACHIEVEMENTS/CONCLUSIONS

The overriding achievement of the Hispanic Vocational Exploration Project has been the high degree of exposure that Southeastern Regional Vocational Technical School has received in the Hispanic community and, as a result, the awareness that has developed in vocational education as an educational alternative for Hispanic youth. (Fourteen participants went through the admissions procedure and 12 completed it successfully. It is expected that of these twelve, 10 will actually enroll at the school in September 1981.)

The project has also been successful in increasing the sensitivity and awareness of the vocational school in regard to Hispanic students. Because of the constructive, ongoing dialogue between the school and the Hispanic agency, cooperative mechanisms have been developed to recruit Hispanic students. The school's interest in Hispanics has even extended beyond the exploratory program to its other programs such as the adult evening component.

Because the Hispanic Vocational Exploration Program was a pilot program, there were very few guidelines to follow in implementing it. Staff had to rely for guidance exclusively on the vast experience the agency had accumulated after years of serving the Hispanic community. After two years of programming and ongoing evaluation, the following strategies

have been successfully developed. All have been addressed in detail in other parts of the report.

Outreach and recruitment - direct contact with students and parents through the school system and home visits, using bilingual, bicultural personnel.

Career Education - emphasis on self-knowledge, self-esteem, values clarification and decision making.

Support services - transportation, tutoring counseling and recreational activities were provided to address identified needs.

Networking - the utilization of a community based agency as a liaison between two public school systems (New London and Southeastern Regional Vocational Technical School) and the Hispanic community.

Viewed individually, each one of these strategies appears to be simplistic. What has been a revelation to everyone involved in the project is that the coordination of these distinct and separate efforts has produced a cohesive and comprehensive program which has had substantial impact.

The need to integrate Hispanics into the vocational school system, wherever they are excluded, is not a simplistic problem. A multi-faceted strategy must be developed which addresses the roles of state administrators, vocational school staff, public school officials and teachers, community leaders,

and finally the students themselves. If the success of this project is to be measured at all, it should be in relation to its success in developing such a multi-faceted strategy.

The project must also be evaluated in long range terms. Within the parameters of the effort described in this report the project achieved a high degree of success. But this success must also be examined in terms of its significance in the larger context of a truly institutional change in bilingual education at the state level. Recent events in the State have already established the foundation for bilingual vocational education. The generic elements of this project could make a significant contribution to implementing this new educational thrust.

As the project enters its second year, one mandate is very clear: A mechanism for perpetuating this effort must be incorporated into the public and vocational school systems. To this end, the dialogue which has been initiated must continue; the strategies which have been tested must be refined; and the commitment which has been expressed must be translated into longrange and continuing action.

VII. FOOTNOTES

1. Spanish-American Cultural Organization Survey and Census of the Hispanic Community of New London, July 1977-July 1978.

2. The school enrollment statistics included in this proposal were compiled from two documents:

   "Local Public School Enrollment and Enrollment in Other Educational Facilities as of October 1, 1978," State Department of Education, Bureau of Grants Processing and Information, and

   "Vocational Technical Schools, October 1, 1979, Enrollment by Trade, By Racial/Ethnic Group, and Sex," RR-VTS-4, March, 1980, Bureau of Vocational Program Planning and Development, State Department of Education.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

5. Masley, Philip T. and English, Thomas W., "A study to Determine the Need for Bilingual Vocational Education in Connecticut", New Britain, Connecticut, Central Connecticut State College, 1977, p. 34.

6. Puerto Ricans in the United States: An Uncertain Future, October, 1976, A Report of the United States Commission on Civil Rights.

7. Russell, George, "It's Your Turn in the Sun", Time Magazine, New York, October 16, 1968, p. 51.

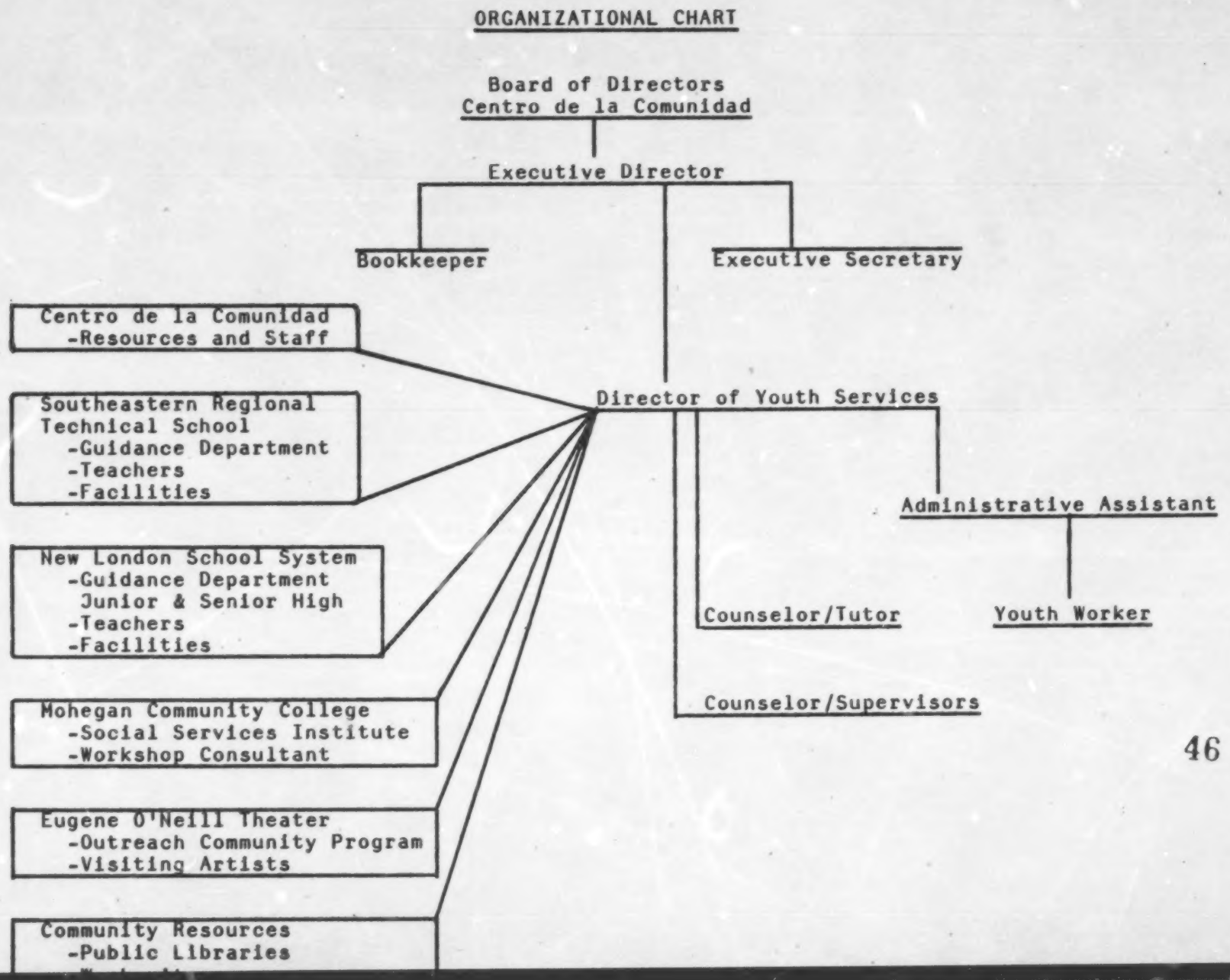
8. On October 12, 1980, the Board of Directors of Nuestra Casa, Inc. and the Spanish American Cultural Organization, Inc. formally voted to unite the two agencies. The new organization was named Centro de la Comunidad, Inc.

9. Fourteen of this year's program participants (42%) went through the admissions procedure of Southeastern Regional Vocational Technical School. Of these, two were not admitted, and two, after extensive counseling, decided to continue at the High School. A total of 10 participants from this program are expected to enter the vocational school in September, 1981.

BUDGET-VOCATIONAL EXPLORATION PROGRAM

SALARIES		
2 Bilingual Counselors (part-time)		$13,093
Counselor/Tutor (part-time)		7,107
Account/Clerk (part-time)		4,567
Vocational Education Teachers (contractual)		5,719
	Total	$25,486
TRAVEL		
Student		781
Staff		200
	Total	$ 981
SUPPLIES & MATERIALS		
Educational		200
Shop		1,812
Office		100
Snacks		425
	Total	$ 2,537
COMMUNICATIONS		
Telephone		203
Publicity		100
Postage		100
	Total	$ 403
INDIRECT COSTS		
Occupancy		1,193
	Total Program	$30,600

APPENDIX B


ORGANIZATIONAL CHART
Board of Directors
Centro de la Comunidad
Executive Director
Bookkeeper
Executive Secretary
Centro de la Comunidad
-Resources and Staff
Southeastern Regional
Technical School
-Guidance Department
-Teachers
-Facilities
New London School System
-Guidance Department
Junior & Senior High
-Teachers
-Facilities
Mohegan Community College
-Social Services Institute
-Workshop Consultant
Eugene O'Neill Theater
-Outreach Community Program
-Visiting Artists
Community Resources
-Public Libraries
Director of Youth Services
Administrative Assistant
Counselor/Tutor
Youth Worker
Counselor/Supervisors

APPENDIX C

JOB DESCRIPTION

Position Title : Counselor/Supervisor

General Duties :

1. Performs community outreach activities for the program, including visits to the public schools, homes, community organizations, and programs.

2. Recruits participants, including basic orientation to project, collection of all necessary written data and initial evaluation.

3. Transports participants to vocational technical school throughout project, providing supervision, interpretation, counseling, and referral to any necessary supportive services.

4. Meets regularly with participants on an individual or group basis to promote self-evaluation, group rapport, cultural and linguistic identity.

5. Meets regularly with Coordinator and other project staff to conduct ongoing evaluation of project and participants.

6. Maintains files, attendance records and all written information for individual participants.

Qualifications Required

1. B.A. degree or high school diploma with 2-3 years experience working with youth.

2. Bilingual: Spanish/English

3. Ability to supervise group of youngsters, and relate to them on a positive, constructive basis.

4. General knowledge of or willingness to learn, basic counseling techniques, group dynamics, vocational education orientation.

5. Connecticut Driver's Licence, with good driving record.

JOB DESCRIPTION

Position Title: Account/Clerk

General Duties:

1. Maintains all fiscal records and reports required by funding source, including payroll accounts, expenditures, billings, mileage record reports, phone account, etc.

Qualifications Required:

1. High School Diploma
2. Basic knowledge of secretarial work
3. Basic knowledge of bookkeeping/ accounting
4. Good math skills
5. 1 year experience in area of work
6. Bilingual: Spanish/English

JOB DESCRIPTION

Position Title : Counselor/Tutor

General Duties :

1. Provides one-to-one personal and academic counseling to students enrolled in the Vocational Exploration Project.
2. Evaluates the academic performance of each participant and with the help of the classroom teacher develops a plan for remediation when needed.
3. Assists program staff in coordinating out-of school tutorial services for the participants.
4. Serves as a liaison between the school, the home and the project.
5. Maintains such records as are deemed necessary for the best functioning of the project.

Qualifications Required :

1. B.A. degree preferably in education, counseling or related field.
2. Bilingual: Spanish/English
3. Demonstrated ability to relate to youth 13-14 years old.

VOCATIONAL EXPLORATION PROGRAM

APPENDIX D

SCHEDULE

September 4 - 7:00 PM	Orientation and Registration Groton Tech.
September 9, 10, 11 - 3:00 PM	Workshops New London Library
September 16-October 9	First cycle
October 14, 15, 16	Workshops
October 20-November 19	Second Cycle
November 24, 25	Workshops
November 26	Vacation
December 1-December 19	Third Cycle
December 24-December 31	Vacation
January 5, 6, 7	Workshops
January 12-February 4	Fourth Cycle
February 9-February 18	Vacation
February 23-25	Workshops
March 2-March 25	Fifth Cycle
March 30-April 8	Workshops and other activities
April 13-April 22	Vacation
April 27-May 20	Sixth Cycle
May 26-May 28	Workshops

CAREER EDUCATION WORKSHOP
SAMPLE FORMAT

OBJECTIVES

1. To continue building self-esteem.
2. To continue inclusion and team building process.
3. To begin building a sense of teamwork.
4. To continue building a sense of cooperation.
5. To begin developing concensus and group problem solving skills.
6. To evaluate the program thus far.

ACTIVITIES

1. Inclusion exercise.

2. Survival exercise in groups of four.
   - -Shelter
   - -Food
   - -Clothing
   - -Health
   - -Water
   - -Community
   - -Fire
   - -Protection

3. I learned statements

4. Snack

1. "Yesterday at the workshop I..."

2. Written evaluation of the program
   - -3 things I learned.
   - -3 things I liked.
   - -3 things that could be improved.

3. Discussion of Detentions

4. New games

5. Snack

1. "One thing I do well..."

2. IALAC Exercise

3. Killer statements

4. Up statements

5. Discussion in groups
   - -name some of each
   - -practice up statement

6. "I feel good when..."

7. I learned statements

8. Snack

STUDENT EVALUATION FORM

APPENDIX F

KEY : 4 Excellent, 3 Good, 2 Fair, 1 Poor

NAME: _____ SHOP _____

DATE _____

		Comments
I.	PERFORMANCE IN SHOP	
	a. Command of vocabulary particular to this trade.	
	b. Use of tools or machines particular to this trade.	
	c. Ability to follow oral instructions.	
	d. Ability to follow written instructions.	
	e. Quality of performance in "hands-on" project.	
II.	ATTITUDE	
	a. Effort	
	b. Degree of participation	
	c. Interest	
	d. Conduct	

III. ACADEMIC - Did you observe any deficiency in:

a. Math

b. Reading

IV. LANGUAGE

Was language a problem for this participant in your shop?

V. APTITUDE FOR TRADE

Based on your observations, does this student have any special aptitude for this trade?

VOCATIONAL EXPLORATION PROJECT

STUDENT EVALUATION OF PROGRAM

Three things I liked.

Three things I learned.

Three things I would change.

VOCATIONAL EXPLORATION PROJECT

Student's Evaluation of Program
October 15

13 Respondants

THREE THINGS I LIKED	NO. OF RESPONSES
Behavior of Counselors	5
The work	4
Going roller skating	3
Workshops	3
Food	2
Cooperation among people	2
Health Services Shop	2
Sharing feelings	1
When they helped us to do different things	1
The girls	1
The cars	1
Proving to my friends I am capable	
Developing a hobby	1
How to be a better friend	1
Field trip to hospital	1

There were 15 different responses. Of these, the following were mentioned a significant number of times.

10--shop
8--career education workshops and affective learning
5--staff
3--recreational activities

THREE THINGS THAT I LEARNED	NO. OF RESPONSES
How to take pulse, temperature, blood pressure	16
How to paint, weld, fix dents, etc.	6
Name calling hurts people's feelings	2
Roller skating	1
How to behave	1
Respect for adults	1
About people's feelings	1
That one counselor is not thoughtful	1

There were 8 different responses. The following were mentioned a significant number of times:

22 -- learnings related to vocational education
6 -- learnings related to affective education or personal growth

THREE THINGS I WOULD CHANGE	NO. OF RESPONSES
Counselor's behavior	4
Too much work in Health Services	4
Nothing	3
More food	2
More recreational activities	1
More equipment	1
Fixing cars	1

There were 7 different responses.

APPENDIX G

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Robert Agnese	-	Guidance Department Southeastern Regional Technical Vocational School
Nereida Centeno	-	Parent
Joseph Murphy	-	Adult Basic Education
Louis Rovero	-	Guidance Department Junior High School
Saul Sibirsky	-	Consultant Bilingual Vocational Education
Joe Turner	-	Electric Boat

Hispanic Vocational Exploration Program
Advisory Council
November 20, 1980

-A-G-E-N-D-A-

Brief overview of project

- design
- enrollment
- schedule

Problems or concerns

Follow-up of past participants presently enrolled at Groton Tech.

A look to the future

-M-I-N-U-T-E-S-

A meeting of the Advisory Committee was held at the Hispanic Youth Center on November 20th at 4:30 P.M.

The following members were present:

-Louis Rovero (Guidance Department Junior High)
-Robert Agnese (Guidance Department Groton Tech.)
-Saul Sibirsky (Consultant Bilingual Voc. Education)

Staff members present:

-Lillian Morales Fletcher (Executive Director)
-Aida Ramírez (Coordinator)
-Beth Stenger (Counselor/Driver)
-Julio Valentín (Counselor/Driver)

I. Brief overview

Lillian Fletcher welcomed the members of the Advisory Committee and introduced the staff. After briefly describing the project design Mrs. Fletcher outlined the contract changes effective this program year.

A counselor/tutor had been placed at the New London Junior High for 20 hours a week.

Career Education Workshops would be designed with the help of a consultant from Mohegan Community College.

Sessions at Groton Tech. would be conducted Monday through Wednesday effective October 20 in order to accomodate the need for after-school supervision for the Vocational School's Shared Time Program.

II. Problems and Concerns

Two problems which had surfaced to date were discussed by the Coordinator:

-dress code - for reasons of safety and in compliance with the school regulations, strict dress code was enforced by the project staff specially in the auto body shop. Participants were asked to wear hard shoes and old clothes. The four girls who had enrolled in the shop refused to comply

II. Problems and Concerns (continued)

even after the clothes had been made available to them. Eventually, after much persuation three of the girls complied and one dropped out. It was felt that the cultural background of the participants had played a prominent role in this issue.

-attendance - the policy of not allowing students who were suspended or absent from school to attend the after-school project was discussed. The Coordinator explained that the reasoning behind this policy was to encourage school attendance. After much discussion it was decided to change the policy so that these participants would not be cut off from the benefits of the project.

III. Follow-up of Participants enrolled at Groton Tech.

Mr. Robert Agnese, Director of Guidance at the school gave an update of Hispanic students enrolled at the school. For the school year 1980-81 a total of 10 Hispanic students were enrolled. Four of these, all freshman, were previous participants of the Vocational Exploration Project. They were the only Hispanic enrollees for this school year from the New London School System. However, 6 students had taken the entrance exam and 5 of these had actually been accepted.

IV. A Look to the Future

Those present expressed great satisfaction with the success of the project. It was unfortunate that further funding would not be forthcoming from the department of Vocational Education to continue the project due to its pilot nature. It was agreed that serious efforts should be made to secure a new funding source to ensure the continuation of the program.

VOCATIONAL EXPLORATION PROJECT
ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MARCH 12, 1981

-A-G-E-N-D-A-

1. Midyear Report

2. Program Update

   Shops
   Enrollment

3. Admission Procedures - Groton Tech

   Test
   Interviews

4. Future Funding

5. Demonstration Project

VOCATIONAL EXPLORATION PROGRAM
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
MARCH 12, 1981

-M-I-N-U-T-E-S-

Members Present	Staff Present
Bob Agnese	Lillian Morales
Nereida Centeno	Aida Ramirez
Saul Sibirsky	Cristina Noguera
Joseph Murphy	Beth Stenger
Louis Rovero	Alberto Peña
Valerie Pichanick	

Members Absent

Joseph Turner

The meeting was called to order at 4:15 P.M. The following agenda items were discussed:

A. Midyear Report - Several items from the report which was submitted in January were highlighted. Of special concern was the high degree of absenteeism from the program and the drop in enrollment. In order to better maintain the interest of the participants it was suggested that 8th graders be recruited next year for the first four cycles of the program only. This would take that group of participants through the admissions test at Southeastern Vocational Technical School. Beginning in February, a second group would be recruited with emphasis on the 7th grade population. Efforts are also underway to outreach from the area parochial schools in order to increase the pool of prospective participants.

B. Program Update

Shops - the fifth cycle of shops began on March 2nd. To date participants have explored 6 different shops: auto-body, health services, food services, welding, machine shop and plumbing.

Enrollment - has been on target or above for the first 4 cycles. In the 5th cycle, 16 participants had been recruited.

C. Admissions Procedures - Southeastern Regional Vocational Technical School: Fourteen participants had taken the admissions test administered on February 14th. The second part of the admissions procedure, an interview, had already begun. Staff was concerned that this interview not be used for recruitment purposes. It was decided to leave this matter for the Admissions Advisory Committee which would meet in May.

D. Future Funding - Ms. Valerie Pichanick, Associate Consultant, Division of Vocational and Adult Education said that the program had a strong possibility of being funded for a third year although not at the present level. Staff would be notified as soon a definite information was available.

E. Demonstration Project - The H.V.E.P. has been chosen to participate in a demonstration project sponsored by the Department of Education, Division of Vocational Education on April 8, 1981 at Southeastern Regional Vocational Technical School. The Project would allow educators throughout the State to learn about successful pilot vocational programs.

VOCATIONAL EXPLORATION PROGRAM
ADVISORY COMMITTEE
JUNE 25, 1981

-A-G-E-N-D-A-

A. Proposal for 1981-1982

1. Program Goals
2. Program changes for 1981-1982
3. Budget

B. Final Report

1. Goal Evaluation
2. Problems and Recommendations
3. Achievements

C. Other Business

VOCATIONAL EXPLORATION PROGRAM
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

-M-I-N-U-T-E-S-

June 25, 1981

Members Present	Staff Present
Bob Agnese	Lillian Morales
Louis Rovero	Aida Ramirez
	Beth Stenger
Excused	Alberto Peña
Nereida Centeno	
Saul Sibirsky	

The final meeting of the Advisory Committee for this program year began at 2:30 P.M. at the Hispanic Youth Center. The following agenda was discussed.

A. Proposal for 1981-1982

The Vocational Exploration Program proposal for next year has been approved by the Division of Vocational Education. THe following modifications and changes to the program were incorporated:

Goals - Two new goals were included which dealt with retention of students at the vocational school and dissemination of information about the project.

Staff - A counselor/tutor would be placed at the vocational school to provide data on the issue of retention, serve as a liaison among students, the school and the home, and provide direct counseling and tutoring services to students.

Target population - Would be expanded to recruit 7th graders for the last two cycles. Mr. Agnese pointed out that the shop offerings would have to follow a consistant schedule so 7th graders would not repeat or miss out on specific shops.

Budget - This year's budget is $30,600. The amount of $34,000 had been requested from the department and only $25,869 approved. Program has an $8,000 deficit which would be covered by Centro.

B. Final Report

Coordinator invited members to comment on the draft of the final report that had been sent to them. Members were satisfied with the content and offered no recommendations.

The problem of attendance and enrollment was again discussed. It is hoped that the modifications in the target population will minimize it.

C. Other Business

It was reported that at least one participant of this year's program who was going on to the High School would be enrolling in the Share Time Program sponsored by S.R.T.S. Centro would facilitate this participation by providing transportation to and from the program. This service would be available to other interested students contingent on availability of space on the vans.

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 P.M.